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ABSTRACT

Few empirical studies have examined student resistance and counterculture. This paper presents findings of a study that investigated the subjective experience of high school students to understand student resistance to the formal culture of schools. The research used a conceptual framework based on the anthropological concepts of "ritual" and liminal experiences in order to: (1) identify student behaviors that constitute resistance; and (2) identify school conditions that promote acts of resistance. Data were gathered from interviews with 48 students at four inner-city high schools in the southeastern United States, observation, and focus-group interviews with students. The four schools were comprised of two citywide schools and two neighborhood schools. Of these, the citywide schools had relatively high admission standards. Findings indicate that students at the neighborhood schools were treated as children, they lacked trust in the teaching and administrative school practices, they viewed the curriculum as irrelevant, and they were silenced by the administration. In the citywide schools, students and teachers engaged in education framed as purposeful social cooperation. Both teachers and students were active participants in the educational process. The citywide schools were characterized by trust, a relevant curriculum, students who were treated as adults, and allowance of student diversity and voice. Code maps of qualitative data are included. (Contains 65 references.) (LMI)

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The Ritual and Liminal Dimensions of Student Resistance to the Formal Culture of Schooling: The Relational Conditions that Promote Resistance

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Despite an expanding literature on resistance theory (Apple, 1982; Everhart,1983; Giroux,1983a; McLaren,1985; Willis, 1977), few empirical studies of student resistance and student counter-culture exist. Giroux (1983a) notes that we need to delve "into the historical and relational conditions from which oppositional behavior develops while at the same time linking such behavior to interpretations provided by the subjects themselves" (p.291). Herr and Anderson (1993) acknowledge that "few researchers have systematically probed the subjective experience of school life as disclosed by the students themselves" (p.2). It is my hope that this study of student resistance to the formal culture of schooling provides some insights into these areas as mentioned by Giroux and Herr and Anderson.

Research Questions

In this study of student resistance, I describe and analyze the results of qualitative interviews and observations conducted at four inner-city high schools located in the southeastern United States. Using a conceptual framework based on the anthropological concepts of ritual (Grimes, 1982) and liminal experiences (Turner, 1968; Van Gennep, 1960), the major empirical questions answered by this research deal with the nature and conceptual utility of student resistance. The three questions under investigation include:

(1) Which student behaviors constitute resistance?,

(2) What are the school conditions that promote and reinforce acts of resistance?, and

(3) Does the anthropological framework used in this research afford the term "resistance" more conceptual utility?

This paper will focus specifically on the second research question--the historical and relational conditions that promote resistance.

Theoretical Framework

Utilizing the scholarship of Grimes (1982) and Turner (1968), I apply the concepts of ritual and liminal experiences to school settings and analyze student resistance as "ritual" performance. My efforts to view student resistance from this prespective are based on the belief that schools serve as rich

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depositories of ritual systems, that rituals play a crucial role in a student's existence, and that the various dimensions of the ritual process are intrinsic to the events and transactions of school culture.

In short, acts of student resistance are ritual and liminal experiences. These actions occur among students who "traffic in illegitimate symbols and who attempt to deride authority by flexing, as it were, their countercultural muscles" (McLaren, 1985). Additionally, these acts of resistance are "liminal" because they are located in what Turner (1969) refers to as the anti-structure. It is in this state that individuals exist outside their ordinary roles, statuses, and positions in society. In this anti-structure the individual is free to challenge the norms, values, and axioms of one's society. It is from this conceptual lens that I analyze student resistance. This perspective allows me the freedom to look at the collision of two cultures--student culture and school culture.

Research Design

The interview data used in this study were collected under the direction of Dr. Mickey Lauria and Dr. Louis F. Miron, both of the University of New Orleans, in 1994. Forty-eight student interviews, that amounted to over 700 pages of transcripts, comprise one part of the data for analysis in this study. The other data were collected by myself through approximately 20 hours of observations at the same four inner-city high schools used for the interviews. Additionally, focus-group interviews were conducted at each of the four high schools to look more closely at the issue of liminality and the students' perceptions of school rules. All student interviews were recorded and later transcribed for use with The Ethnograph (Version 4.0), a qualitative textual analysis computer program.

Sites and Sample

This study focuses on four inner-city high schools located in the southeastern United States. All four schools are located in the same city and within the same school district. Two of the schools, serving the entire school district, have relatively high admission standards. One of these citywide schools has a student population that is 100% African-American with a majority of the students from lower-middle class backgrounds. The other citywide school has a more racially diverse student population (65% African-American, 19% White, 12% Asian-American, and 4% Hispanic).

The other two schools enroll a neighborhood-based student population; one racially and ethnically diverse (79% African-American, 15% White, 6% Asian-American and Hispanic), and the other 100% African-American. Both of these neighborhood schools serve students from a lower socioeconomic background. Forty-eight students were interviewed--twelve from each of the four schools. Purposive sampling techniques (sampling that allows the researcher to uncover the complexities of the phenomena being studied) were employed.

Analysis:
Part I

The Neighborhood Schools:
The Organization of Agency and Identity

The Neighborhood Schools

The Student State--Situating the Interpretation

One of the most striking findings in this study of student resistance is that the student culture at the neighborhood schools is very different from the student culture at the citywide schools. Lauria and Miron (1994), who created this data base of student interviews, arrived at this same conclusion. Using answers supplied to the first interview question (Will you describe for me what it is like being a student at this school?), the voices of the students were loud and clear in relation to their treatment by teachers and administrators, the relevance of the curriculum, and school atmosphere, in general. Listen to the voices of a few of these students:

> CH: *"I hate being at school. School sucks! Teachers come here for life and instead of all that stupid stuff. Nothing because it's boring back here... just come to school in the morning, eat breakfast and wait 'till the bell to ring. The best thing I do is go to lunch."*
>
> DG: *"Well, coming from Gretna...the curriculum and everything else is way below. Like at Gretna I had a 3.9 something average, and they motivated us better than back here. Like teachers really, they'll teach you. Here, if you get it, you get. If you don't, you don't. They have very few teachers that all,you know, really take time, and if you don't get , you know.... We have violence everywhere...One week we had four fights in one day."*
>
> MM: *"You don't feel privilege to be here, not at all. The only privilege you feel at [Neighborhood High] is maybe air conditioner. I mean, but other than that it's just like anywhere else you go and you don't feel safe as you use to, you know. Now it's just like no...everybody is always bringing up guns or you know, you're in class and you see dogs walking around, you know. Guard dogs, you know, and they sniff you sometimes."*
>
> CW: *"They're [teachers] just not in the room teaching you like they should be."*
>
> WS: *"Well, you have to be focused on what your goals and don't let other things distract you. Like (umm) they have a lot of negative things going on like people doing drugs on the back stairwell.*
>
> NB: *"I don't hate it, and I don't love it."*

At the two neighborhood schools, the teachers are perceived as not caring. Some of the teachers curse the students, talk behind their backs, and assign busy work to keep the students occupied. One student described her teacher as "waiting around to collect a paycheck." CD, a student at one of the neighborhood schools, described what was happening in the classrooms as "profanity, card

playing, and disrespect to their elders." She later commented, "I don't trust nobody." The administrators and counselors are also depicted as "not caring." As noted by WS, "They just don't care. They seem like they don't care."

In short, the students display a lack of trust in the administrative and pedagogical practices of the school. Additionally, Fine (1991) makes us cognizant of the fact that silencing shapes low-income public schools more intimately than relatively privileged ones. "In such contexts there is more to hide and control, and indeed a greater discrepancy between pronounced social ideologies and lived experiences" (Fine, 1991, p.34). Fine also notes, "...[L]ow-income schools officially contain rather than explore social and economic contradictions, condone rather than critique prevailing social and economic inequities, and usher children and adolescents into ideologies and ways of interpreting social evidence that legitimate rather than challenge conditions of inequity" (p.61).

As the data demonstrate, the voices of these neighborhood students are silenced. That their lives are defined as silenced implies that the individuals involved have been deprived of voice without their consent--that they are victims of oppression. When asked, "Do you think they [teachers and administrators] listen to you?," MM responded to the interviewer, "You're the first person who ever came back here and ask the students how they feel."

Amazingly, many students at the neighborhood schools see some value in "playing the game" which eventually ends with a high school diploma. But the educational relationship between teacher and student that is evident in these schools is inherently asymmetrical (See Biesta, 1994). In an asymmetrical relationship the student is viewed as lacking the characteristics of full subjectivity and is treated as "not yet" a subject. From this perspective educational theory or philosophy has the task of explaining the "mysterious transformation" from nonsubjectivity into subjectivity. This transformation is viewed as the responsibility of the teacher (translated adult or subject). As a result, there is little cooperation between teacher and student in the educational process. The students are not treated as competent partners in the educational process. These ideas are part of the competing paradigms discussed by Biesta (1994)--the philosophy of consciousness and practical intersubjectivity. The characteristics of student and school culture at the neighborhood schools discussed above are further developed in the analysis that follows.

School Conditions that Promote or Reinforce Resistance

The second research question deals with the school conditions that promote or reinforce student resistance. If one can identify the "causes" of this resistance, then possibly there are valuable lessons to be learned concerning administrative and pedagogical practices. An analysis of the data of the two neighborhood schools reveals four conditions that contribute to fostering student resistance. These include: (1) the school's construction of the student as a child (or non-subject) rather than as an emerging-adult (subject); (2) the student's lack of trust in the pedagogical or administrative practices of the school; (3) the silencing of student voices; and (4) the irrelevance of the curriculum to the student's life (See Appendix A for the code map). I will now look at each of these "conditions" that emerged from a

careful analysis of the students' discourse.

(1)Construction as Child--Resistance to an Adult-Ordered Landscape

--"I'm older now. I'm more mature" (AH, Student interview, 1994).

The students at the two neighborhood schools shared one common set of experiences: resistance to the adult-ordered landscapes that attempted to define their daily lives. McLaren (1986) notes that "following their entrance into the building, students realign and readjust their behavior, shifting from the natural flow of the street corner state to the more formal and rigidly sequestered precinct of the student state" (p.88). In short, students are forced to write their roles in conformity with the teacher's master script. They are supposed to adopt the gestures, attitudes, and work habits of "being a student." In doing this, though, the student's subjectivity is either subordinated to the teacher's conception of it, or possibly totally negated.

For students experiencing first-hand the power of an institution (the school), resistance involves "positioning a world of refusal" (Vandenberg, 1971, p.73). From a phenomenological perspective, the student as a conscious being (subject) pursues a project of freedom in order to become someone him or herself, and not a being-for-others. This pursuit, on the part of the student, closely parallels the Heideggerian search for "authenticity." In short, to discover oneself, the student must experience the world in a dialectical fashion, thereby being permitted the freedom to disobey as well as the will to obey the rules of an institution such as school. This idea comes out clearly in the comments of AH (an African-American female) when she states:

> *"But you know, I guess it's all here, what I need. It's just up to me whether I want to do it or not."*

Part of the adult-ordered landscapes at the two neighborhood schools involves the formulation of students as "children" rather than as the young adults or emerging adults they perceive themselves to be. Indeed, much of what is labeled "resistance" results from the relationships that develop between students and teachers in which the student is treated as a child. Many of the students observed and interviewed at the neighborhood schools assume tremendous adult responsibilities at home (e.g., taking care of siblings, contributing to the family income), but at school they are forced to become "children" again. This shift back to "being a child" occurs when the teacher announces:

> *"OK, students [or children]. Settle down. You heard the bell.Into your seats and get ready for class. Why do I have to tell you this every single day. Settle down. You know the rules."*

This tension between "adult" and "child" identities is too confusing to handle and creates the necessary conditions for resistance to occur. When asked to discuss what was important to the student, AB (an African-American female) responded:

"Well, helping others that need to be help, education, family, respect, and ,you know, ***maturity****....I'm older now.* ***I'm more mature****."*

In the interviews the students were asked, "What do you like about the way teachers and administrators treat you at school?" The theme of "treat me as an adult" is clearly evident in the remarks of SI, an African-American honor student:

You know, I carry myself in a way that you wouldn't think I would clown around or anything like that. I would carry myself like an ***adult*** *in front of the teachers and the administration. You know, not to make them think that I was just putting on something or just playing a role--doing something that I'm not. But that's how I carry myself....With the teachers or administrators, they may think that (umm) you're just a* ***child*** *and you don't know. What they should do sit down, listen to us."*

MM, an African-American female with a 1.8 GPA, likewise notes:

"The students are rowdy, but they're so use to getting treated like ***children****. I mean...they...you know can you blame them if their first period teacher lets them do what they want."*

Part of the teachers' formulation of students as children gets translated into a lack of respect. One aspect of this lack of respect is described by the students as teachers "talking behind their backs." We can gain some insights into this by listening to the following students:

AB: *"No, I don't really know if they--if they would treat them differently, but I think that (ah) kind of, you know, effect them in some way cause that's not showing no kind of, you know, example. You know, to be an* ***adult*** *and supposed to be* ***mature****, you shouldn't ,you know ,have...it's not your business, you shouldn't sit up there and talk about anyone or anyone else's business if they wasn't talking to you. Now, if they talking to you, that should be among you and that person. But as far as going around saying something else to another teacher or, you know, another administrator, that's not right. So that's kind of like showing a bad example in life , too."*

MM: *"They would --they would discuss it with other teachers that they're friends with, and the teacher would come ask you about it wanting to get all in your business. It get back."*

DG: *"And they get in they 'lil groups and they will talk, and you know, I know it just don't stay right there. It go on and on, and everybody...that don't... a person that doesn't even know you looking at ya', 'Oh, I heard about her.' And you don't know...you might not be that type of person that they say."*

Finally, on the subject of talking behind the student's back, TH, an African-American male, comments:

"There's some teachers that you can go to talk and tell them anything, and you know, they'll relate to you and won't tell anybody. But there's some teachers don't want to hear it, and you tell them, and the next thing you know, the teacher down--next door knows. And the next teacher knows and everybody knows."

The last element of treating the students as children demonstrates itself as ridicule and cursing on the part of teachers. Note this element in the dialogue below:

> SI: *"For example, one of the teachers, you know, she just--she really just don't care. Umm, she use a few terms towards African-American students."*
> Interviewer: *"Terms like what?"*
> SI: *"Umm, she would just say "you nigger" or something like that."*
> Interviewer: *"In class, she would say that?"*
> SI: *"Uh, huh.*
> Interviewer: *"And she's white?"*
> SI: *"Uh, huh."*

Later, in the interview SI goes on to add:

> *"Some teachers...well. It hasn't happened to me,but it has happened to other students. They might (umm) curse the students out. They'll talk to them negatively. They'll talk about them. Umm, it's just that they'll put them down. If they don't like you, they'll just put you down. They don't care what."*

TH also offers some insights into the relationship that develops between teachers and their students regarding a lack of respect on the part of the teacher.

> TH: *"Oh, some teachers have the tendency to curse you out."*
> Interviewer: *"Like curse words?"*
> TH: *"Yeah."*
> Interviewer: *"Like for example?"*
> TH: *"Fuck you, you know."*
> Interviewer: *"They 're going to say that?"*
> TH: *"Yeah, she does that. (laughs) If she gets mad enough, she does that."*
> Interviewer: *"And what happens if the student said, "fuck you back?"*
> TH: *"And then she tells the office, and the office is not going to believe the student over the teacher. They're going to believe the teacher over the student."*

DG sums it up well with her comment:

> *"You know, they need to be more caring, I think."*

I find these student comments very interesting when compared to the conclusions drawn by Shakeshaft (1995). She writes: "Students tell us they feel powerless and are looking to adults in schools to behave like adults and enforce a climate that is healthy and supportive" (p.42). The verbal abuse and the ridicule suffered by the students is far from a healthy and supportive environment.

I contend that the formulation of students as children negates what is central to the students' emerging conception of themselves as adults. There is a crucial change in the relations between adults and adolescents from the previous situation of the child's blind faith in adult wisdom. Teachers (adults) need to relate to their students in terms of greater mutuality and reciprocity, recognizing their students' growing autonomy. As we have hopefully learned from Everhart's (1983) research, students like teachers

who respect and listen to them and who do not treat them as if they were "third graders." In short, a mediated dialectic sees early adolescents as persons who are neither dependent children nor fully independent adults, but whose emergent sense of self incorporates an adult-like aura of sophistication and maturity and retains a child-like sense of emotional spontaneity. I don't intend here to romanticize adolescence, but to emphasize the importance of a mediated dialectic.

I now turn my attention to the second school condition that promotes or reinforces student resistance: the lack of trust in the administrative and pedagogical practices of the school. I begin the investigation of this theme by looking at the scholarship of Erickson (1987).

(2) Boundaries into Borders: An Issue of Trust

Several anthropologists of education (See D'Amato, 1987a, 1987b; Erickson, 1987) have tried to account for the situational variables responsible for school achievement and failure. Erickson's work is especially relevant since it draws on concepts from resistance theory and critical educational research. According to Erickson (1987), to speak of school failure or success is to speak of "learning or not learning what is deliberately taught" in the school (p.343). Human beings are learning all the time, so when we say that students are "not learning," we mean that they are not learning "what school authorities, teachers, and administrators intend for them to learn as a result of intentional instruction" (pp.343-344). According to Erickson, learning what is deliberately taught can be seen as a form of assent. "Not learning" can be seen as a form of resistance.

What, then, determines whether students give their assent or resist? Erickson (1987) argues that "trust," which constitutes the "existential foundations for school legitimacy (p.345)," must be fostered in the administrative and pedagogical practices of the school if students are willing to learn what teachers teach. If the school is not viewed as legitimate by students, if "perceived labor market discrimination" or "cultural conflict" is not offset by economic advocacy in the labor market or a "culturally responsive pedagogy," students are more likely to develop oppositional identities and resist the schooling enterprise. MM noted in her interview: *"I don't trust anyone."* If students trust that their own interests will be advanced by complying with school authority, they are more likely to overcome whatever cultural differences may be impeding effective communication and learning. Without trust, ordinary cultural "boundaries" may be escalated into cultural "borders" and harnessed to the expression of oppositional identities and behaviors (See Erickson, 1987, pp.345-348).

In the following interview excerpt, listen to the comments of an African-American female who trusts her teacher:

> AH: *"The particular teacher I have now, she's real strict, and you know you can do something, and she'll be like "I'm going to keep telling you until you do it right," you know. And she'll go over it as many times as it takes. She'll do whatever she has to do because like she say she will hate to see you down or be homeless or whatever, you know. And she just, I don't she--she might be mean every now and then, but deep down you know she care because if she didn't she wouldn't put up with half the stuff that she do with you.*

> *You know, even the wild students, you know, she put up with them, and she let them know. And the most wildest students I never thought would calm down. They calmed down and listen to her. You know, they might go to the next teacher class and act stupid, but once they come to her, you know, they gone do what's right. She talk to them. She let them know that she care, and she care enough to help them.*

It needs to be noted that this comment was not typical of the responses of the neighborhood students. The students perceived their teachers, counselors, and administrators as not caring and not able to be trusted. As I discussed earlier, many students were worried that if they shared their problems or concerns with the teachers that "gossip" would result. Later in the same interview, AH sums it up well when she says:

> *"Let them [the students] know that you [the teacher] care."*

What she offers by way of advice needs to be heard by the faculties and administrations at these neighborhood schools. Her voice must not be silenced.

Wehlage, Rutter, and Turnbaugh (1987) discuss the importance of establishing positive social bonds between teachers and students. Murphy, Hull, and Walker (1987) note that in the absence of a trusting and caring relationship, many students are likely to drift through school. This positive relationship helps to break the cycle of pervasive student disengagement from serious intellectual pursuits (Sizer, 1994). Likewise, the Carnegie Council (1989) addresses the importance of the "personalization of structures" in schools:

> Every student needs at least one thoughtful adult who has the time and takes the trouble to talk with the student about academic matters, personal problems, and the importance of performing well in...school. (p.37)

I shall return to this issue of caring and trust. In Part II of the analysis, the citywide students paint a picture through their interviews of a very caring and trusting environment.

(3) Legitimated and Non-legitimated Voices: The Silencing of Student Voice

Bakhtin (1981), a Soviet literary critic, discusses the concepts of multivoicedness and legitimated and non-legitimated voice. He holds that the inward speech that becomes outwardly vocalized is probably that which is most compatible with the socially organized ideology. Thus, as students silence those inner voices that are not legitimated by the educational institution, conformity to the school's socially organized ideology is achieved. "Because of the dynamic of inner speech, then, student silencing need not be an overt form of oppression, but rather can be the result of institutional deafness, or the failure to elicit non-legitimated voice" (Anderson & Herr, 1993, p.60).

Just as students learn what behavior is institutionally sanctioned (e.g., sitting quietly in a desk,

raising one's hand to answer a question), they also learn to recognize institutionally sanctioned discourse. I contend that the following student responses are examples of "institutionally sanctioned discourse." When asked, "What do you value?," or "What's important to you?" the students responded:

> KV: *"Getting good things [grades] are always important because if you don't get good grades, you don't get a good report card. You get in trouble by your parents. Don't get good grades, you don't get a diploma. You can't get a high school diploma, you don't get a good job, and you can't make it in the world....And I feel that's very important because without your diploma, there's nothing else you can do."*

TH goes on in his interview to comment:

> *"That's my number one goal. Graduate after that--graduating from college and get a well paying job, get married and have kids and a nice house."*

The student discourse noted above becomes more interesting when it is noted that KV (a white male) has a 1.9 GPA and TH (an African-American male) has a 1.8--not exactly what one would expect for the answers they supplied to the interview questions. The "American Dream" is alive and well, as is evidenced by these student responses.

Conforming to this "institutionally sanctioned discourse," in essence, only heightens the disjuncture between what is viewed as possible as a result of the successful completion of school and what is more probable in the real world. The voice of the student is silenced. It is, then, this silencing which can lead to the type of resistance voiced by CH:

> *"You can't explain nothing. I know , I don't say nothing...nothing ."*

(4) The Irrelevance of the Curriculum

From the perspective of critical educational theorists, the curriculum represents much more than a program of study, a classroom text, or a course syllabus. Rather, it represents the "introduction to a particular form of life; it serves in part to prepare students for dominant or subordinate positions in the existing society. The curriculum favors certain forms of knowledge over others and affirms dreams, desires, and values of select groups of students over other groups, often discriminatorily on the basis of race, class, and gender (Apple, 1982). Comer (1988), for example, notes that public schools, founded on middle class values, presume that all students will come to them with middle class socialization. While this expectation places students reared in working class homes (e.g., students at the neighborhood highs) at risk, it affords middle class children a head start. In short, critical educational theorists are concerned with how curriculum benefits dominant groups and excludes others. In this regard, they often refer to the hidden curriculum. In this section, I present the issue of curriculum irrelevance. Many students at the neighborhood schools had comments to make regarding the classes offered at their school. Additionally, the pedagogical strategies observed in the classrooms did not guarantee the incorporation of students' everyday experiences into the curriculum (See Fine, 1991). I tie the issue of curriculum relevance to Mouffe's (1988) conceptualization of resistance as a struggle against the

"growing uniformity of social life." She writes:

> This imposition of a homogenized way of life, of a uniform cultural pattern, is being challenged by different groups that reaffirm their right to their difference, their specificity, be it through the exaltation of their regional identity or their specificity in the realm of fashion, music, or language. (p.93)

Let's carefully listen to the challenge of these African-American students to the uniformity and irrelevance of the school's curriculum. When asked what courses were helping to prepare the students for their future lives, they responded:

> NB: *"I think that they should have more black history back here, not just history once a month. Black history once a month in February. I think they should have it all year round."*

> MM: *"So you know I think –I think the school should teach us the students more about the everyday life instead of always on Rosa Parks and this ...and kind of... I really think that we should learn more about today."*

> CH: *"Yeah, all that stuff...you don't go fill out an application about a polynomial...or they don't tell you to work that fraction on the application...Electives and stuff you should really come for. That should be required because that's life stuff. You might need it. You see it's mixed up...But the school don't take them [electives] as important as the other subjects."*

> WS: *" I don't know. Umm, (laughs) like are they going to prepare me? I really don't know....Umm, I can't answer that.*

Later in the interview with CH there was an interesting exchange I would like to present:

> CH: *"They try to make you...They keep saying that stuff like this is important like when you get out into the real world."*
> Interviewer: *" This is what I am talking about. They don't try to make you... [?]"*
> CH: *"They try to make you think what they think is important like fractions and polynomials...That stupid stuff."*
> Interviewer: *"Okay, you think they are pushing this stuff on you. What's important to you, then?"*
> CH: *"Ah, sex. (laughs)...Important to me is making money. Without money you can't do it...People say that money ain't all that, but people...everybody make it all that so you got to...."*
> Interviewer: *"But they are teaching you..."*
>
> CH: *"But instead they are teaching me fractions and polynomials, you know, equations (laughs). You see stuff is good to a certain extent or maybe they should put it in a better way...They keep trying to go on and on with it, unnecessary."*

There is one final student comment, regarding curriculum relevance, that I feel must be presented. This student lives daily with the pain of watching her mom cook for a living. The student's mother is "sick everyday" and has had two heart attacks. Unfortunately, according to MM, "she can't quit work because who going to pay our bill." MM comments:

> *" Yeah, I think--I think-- I think that in classes instead of always learning*

> *about the past, you should always...a teacher should always...all your classes should be learning about what's going on now. You know, what's going on today. How things are handled. I think that should be taught. Things would go much better. A lot of student would learn much more. You know, so you're busy trying to learn about people who aren't even here, you don't know about the people who are here."*

It is my contention that this curriculum perspective creates conditions for the student's self-empowerment as an active subject. In other words, the press for silencing at the neighborhood schools is not complete. I am using the term empowerment to refer to the process through which students learn to critically appropriate knowledge in order to broaden their understanding of themselves, the world, and the possibilities for transforming the taken-for-granted assumptions about what is taught as well as the way they live. Aronowitz (1986) describes one aspect of empowerment as "the process of appreciating and loving oneself" (p.17). Empowerment, then, is gained from knowledge and social relations that dignify one's own history, language, and cultural traditions. The students involved in this research are calling for that dignification of their African heritage. I contend that they are learning to question those aspects of the dominant culture that will provide them with the basis for defining and transforming, rather than merely serving, the wider social order.

Summary

In summary, students at the neighborhood schools are treated as children (non-subjects), they display a lack of trust in the pedagogical and administrative practices of the schools, and the curriculum is perceived as "not connected" to the students' everyday lives. These are the conditions that promote or reinforce students' acts of resistance. With all this in mind, I suggest that the neighborhood schools can be thought of in terms of the "philosophy of consciousness" paradigm (See Biesta, 1994).

Biesta (1994) acknowledges that educational philosophy, theory, and practice have been dominated by this perspective. Habermas (1988) holds that this paradigm has dominated the philosophical discourse of modernity (pp.344-345), but that it has exhausted its usefulness (p.346).The four key assumptions of this philosophy of consciousness paradigm that apply to the neighborhood schools include: (1) the asymmetrical character of education; (2) the paradox of education; (3) the relationship between individuality and sociality; and (4) the way in which agency is understood. I discuss these more fully later, but I briefly offer some explanation that applies to the neighborhood schools.

Essentially, the neighborhood school student (constructed as child) lacks the characteristics of full subjectivity and the educational process gets explained as a transformation from nonsubjectivity into subjectivity. Only the teacher (constructed as adult) can make the child into a free, self-responsible subject. But to accomplish this end, the child must be denied his or her freedom and responsibility during the process of education. Voices, like those of students at the neighborhood schools, are silenced. Individual subjectivity is understood as pre-social, as something over and against the sociocultural

environment. As a consequence, the agency of the student can only be maintained by keeping it "pure from external, sociocultural influences" (Biesta, 1994, p.303).

In Part II of the analysis, I discuss the citywide schools in relation to Biesta's (1994) alternative to the philosophy of consciousness--practical intersubjectivity. I think it will be obvious to the reader that the students and teachers at the citywide schools are engaging in education framed as purposeful social cooperation. That co-constructive process has as its purpose the construction of meaning and knowledge. In other words, the collective activities of student and teacher constitute the meaning of what is learned. It is not the case that the teacher offers meaning and the student receives it (as evidenced at the neighborhood schools). Both teacher and student contribute. The fact that the contribution of the student differs from the contribution of the teachers is not important. Both are active participants in the educational process.

Analysis:
Part II

The Citywide Schools:
The Organization of Agency and Identity

In this second analysis section, I continue my "tales of the field." In many ways, these tales are quite different--as different as night and day from the analysis presented in the previous section. Following Miron and Lauria (1994), I call these two schools the citywide schools. They have entrance requirements, as well as retention standards, and are, therefore, more selective than the neighborhood schools in the composition of their student populations.

I start by giving the reader a look at the school and student culture. I, then, analyze the data collected at these schools relative to the research questions posed at the onset of this study. As in the neighborhood schools, there was little variance in student responses so an analysis of gender, race, class, or academic ability was not profitable. Additionally, the most significant differences were found between the neighborhood schools and the citywide schools, not within these classifications.

The Citywide Schools

The Student State--Situating the Interpretation

In stark contrast to the neighborhood schools, the citywide schools have a very different student culture. When neighborhood school students were asked to describe their school they used words and phrases like: "hate it," "school sucks," "boring," "don't feel privileged," and "going down hill." In contrast, on a much more positive note, the students at the citywide schools used the following words and phrases to describe their school and student culture: "an honor," "a privilege," "fun," "exciting," "involved," "great," family environment," "doors opening," "celebrating our cultural diversity," and "accepting." As

noted by Miron and Lauria (1994), "It is clear that students at these schools have a sense of pride.... While students at...[the citywide schools] feel chosen, privileged, or honored to attend, the students at Hood High feel stuck 'back here'" (p.20). Let's listen to the comments of some of these students about their school and student culture:

> CM: *"It's like--it's like once you get into the school, it's like a whole bunch of doors just open for you. It's like opportunity is there for you to take it, you know."*
>
> CB: *"It's--it's fun and it's interesting because it's so many different cultures and different people. You have so many different things you can experience."*
>
> WT: *"Being a student at [school name] is a challenge. It's good. Umm, you're able to see your real potential at [school name] because you have a lot of challenges, a lot of people, you know, test scores, grades, it's a challenge."*
>
> JM:*"It's fun, exciting. You get involved with a lot of community activities. You are (ah) looked upon as (ah) as specially being a young black male myself, you get a lot of prestige and a lot of pushing from your teachers and the principal, and I really enjoy that especially from the principal."*
>
> JW:*"Well, I think being a student--a student at this school (umm) is great because they let you feel the academic intensity in the air. They...the students here help me excel because they push me to go forward not backwards."*

At the two citywide schools the teachers and administrators are portrayed as caring. The students talk about their school work with pride and excitement. Essentially, the students display trust in the administrative and pedagogical practices of these schools. One of these schools is even compared to a "family." This is quite different from the description of culture at the neighborhood schools. Their voices and diversity are celebrated at the citywide schools. As CM stated in her interview:

> *"We have a lot of different students, like nationalities and a lot of people who dress different and stuff. And I think this school is the best school that really accepts people for who and what they are."*

Additionally, as I will demonstrate in the analysis, the educational relationship between student and teacher is symmetrical (Biesta, 1994). As a result, there is much cooperation in the educational process--education becomes "fun."

School Conditions that Promote or Reinforce Resistance

An analysis of the data of the two citywide schools reveals some of conditions that contribute to limiting or containing resistance behaviors. These include: (1) the school's construction of the student as an adult (subject) rather than as a child; (2) the student's trust in the pedagogical and administrative

practices of the school that create a caring environment; (3) the relevance of the school's curriculum to the student's life; and (4) the allowance and appreciation of student diversity and voice. The reader should be struck with the fact that these themes are the opposite of those that emerged from the neighborhood schools. I contend that the neighborhood schools are working within the paradigm referred to as the "philosophy of consciousness" while the citywide schools are working from the perspective of "practical intersubjectivity" (See Biesta, 1994).

(1)Construction of Student as an Adult

The students at the neighborhood schools shared one common set of experiences: resistance to the adult-ordered landscape of school. This adult-ordered landscape manifested itself through the teachers' treatment of their students as children, and a lack of respect for the students involving gossip, ridicule, and cursing. In contrast, there was no mention of any of these issues at the citywide schools. No where in the student discourse did I find evidence that the teachers or administrators "think that you're just a child" (Neighborhood student interview, 1994). What was found is documented by the following interview excerpts:

> CC: *"Umm, they --they treat you with respect, and, you know, being knowledgeable. Umm, they don't treat you like kids. You know, like little bitty kids or something. That's what I like about them."*
>
> MS: *"Umm, maybe just their [teachers' and administrators'] attitudes toward the students. You know, it's not like you're a kid....So, I mean, in that class you're treated more of, you know, as an adult."*
>
> MA: *"Teachers treat you like nice and respect you."*

When asked what the students did not like about their treatment by teachers and administrators, the students responded:

> MS: *"It would be that sometimes the principal or sometimes the teachers are in too much of a rush, and it's just that they don't give you the attention they should....Things just don't get done as quick as they should. Some teachers...I took a test two weeks ago. It still ain't back to me. Ah, we took a test in English two weeks before the quarter ended, and it was supposed to be for last quarter and instead it's going on this quarter's grade because we just got the test back."*
>
> DC: *"Nothing much."*
>
> CH: *"What don't I like? Well, (umm)... nothing really...nothing."*
>
> DC: *"Umm, I don't like the gum. I think (ah) students should be allowed to chew gum and shouldn't be suspended for chewing gum."*

From these comments, one gets the impression of a much more healthy and supportive climate at the citywide schools than at the neighborhood schools. The students' formulation as adults is central to their emerging conception of themselves as persons. The teachers at the two citywide schools relate to their students in terms of greater mutuality and reciprocity, recognizing their students' growing autonomy. Students, in short, like teachers who respect and listen to them.

(2) Student Trust in the Pedagogical and Administrative Practices--The School as a Caring Institution

As I mentioned earlier, Erickson (1987) argues that trust constitutes the "existential foundations for school legitimacy" and that trust must be fostered in the administrative and pedagogical practices of the school. In contrast to "I don't trust anyone," the students at the citywide schools responded:

> MB: *"Umm, she just give us work and she explains it to us. You know, stuff we don't understand it, explain it to you until, you know, you really get it. And sometimes you have to stay after school, you know, so that's how they do it."*
>
> JD: *"You know the teachers, they know try to help you in things that you need. They say you can come in anytime, so, you know, they treat you good....The teachers, they are-- they are very helpful because if we have a problem, they are not only our teachers, but are also a friend and a counselor towards us."*
>
> WT: *"I think coming here is like a reward as far as the teachers and the administrators and stuff because they really try to help you."*
>
> CT: *"But then...some teachers, if you having problems, they'll talk to you and offer you help on the side and stuff or you can come in the morning or after school for tutoring or whatever."*
>
> CH: *"They [teachers and administrators] respect us. They care."*
>
> JW: *"I strive forward in all ways because the teachers give me the energy that I need and the students too cause they help me as well as the teachers do."*

No where in the interviews at the citywide schools did a student comment on a lack of trust in their teachers or administrators. The students at the citywide schools perceive that their own interests are being advanced by the school. This theme also is evident in the students' perception of the curriculum as relevant to their lives (See below). The citywide students, then, do not resist complying with the authority of their schools. Simply stated, they trust their teachers and administrators who are helping to create a nurturing and caring environment.

Witherell and Noddings (1991) state that this notion of caring is especially useful in education because it emphasizes the relational nature of human interaction and of all moral life. "Our use of the term caring relation assumes a relational, or connective, notion of self, one that holds that the self is formed and given meaning in the context of its relations with others" (p.5). A caring relation requires contributions

from both parties, teachers and students. This relation provides the foundation of trust for teaching and counseling alike.

(3)The Relevance of the School's Curriculum

While the neighborhood school students saw the curriculum as irrelevant to their everyday lives, the students at the citywide schools saw their dreams and desires, in many ways, affirmed by the curriculum of their schools. The curriculum at the citywide schools is perceived as connected to the everyday lives of the students. For example, here is an excerpt from the interview with KG:

> Interviewer: *"What do you mean by educating them to be street wise? What's that mean?"*
> KG: *"To teach students, you know, right from wrong and to dangers of what to look out for in the streets like drug dealers and gangs. You know, what places are safe and what places, you know, are more dangerous than others."*
> Interviewer: *"Do you think teachers here try to make you aware of those things?"*
> KG: *"Yeah."*
> Interviewer: *"Do they talk about it in class"*
> KG: *"Yeah, we even have (ah)...they even have people that come...like yesterday and Monday, t hey had people that came to talk to the students about date rape."*

Evidenced in the student interviews were the connections that students made regarding their present course work and their future careers. Students at the city wide schools want to be lawyers, doctors, registered nurses, and psychiatrists. In interview after interview, the students felt that their high school course work was going to help prepare them for their future employment. When asked, "What courses are you taking now, or that you've already taken, do you think will help you reach you goal?," the students replied:

> MB: *"Language arts, yeah, that and (umm) science....Language arts, you know, you learn a lot of stuff in there that you gone need in the future like (umm) vocabulary words and reading and stuff like that. And for science, you learn about (umm) things like the human body, you know, because I want to be some kind of doctor when I grow up."*
>
> DP: *"Language arts, it teaches you grammar and stuff that you have to learn how to speak and write. So it's like, if you get a business job, you can talk correctly. And mathematics, if you get an accountant job or something like that where you have to use algebra or numbers, you'll know how to do it instead of figuring it out."*
>
> CM: *"Well, biology is a big part of it....Umm, just to get a good education so because I want to be a pediatrician because I love children. So, I hope that I can, you know, get good grades. You know, enough to be able to make it into medical school because I'd like to kind of help the children in Africa and stuff. Like children who have a lot of diseases and stuff. I'd like to go, you know, and try to help them."*

While the neighborhood students complained about "busywork," students at the citywide schools saw some value in the work in which they were engaged. For example,

> MB: *"They give you work that you needed to know. They just don't give you work to be like babysitting you or something. You know, they give you work (ah) that you really need in life."*

One student, among the 24 who were interviewed, had a very interesting comment to make regarding the college preparatory curriculum offered at the citywide schools. This is, for all practical purposes, the only evidence of resistance to the curriculum offered by the citywide schools. JM, with a 3.9 GPA, comments:

> *"I don't like the fact that we don't have (umm) things that teach you trade. For some of us, we may not make it into the business world. I think we should have something to fall on, and at this school, they push so much into the (ah) business world that you forget about the trade parts."*

In conclusion, the students at the citywide schools are critically appropriating the knowledge taught at their schools. By this I mean that the students see this knowledge as broadening their understanding of themselves and their world. The schools' curriculum is connected to the everyday lives of the students.

(4) The Allowance of Student Diversity and Voice

During the course of the interviews at the neighborhood schools, CH commented, "I don't say nothing because you can't explain nothing." No evidence of this type of silencing was documented at the citywide schools. In the citywide schools students are encouraged to celebrate their cultural diversity, to stand up and speak, and to voice their opinions to the teachers and administrators. The following comments help to demonstrate these ideas:

> JM: *"...[A]nd the teachers would give you a lot of commendations that you had the courage to stand up and say what you had to say."*

> MS: *"The teachers and administration like to see students (ah) talk well and do things like voicing your opinions."*

Later, in the same interview, JM notes that his school has a committee that allows the students to voice their opinions to the teachers and administration. He says:

> *"...[O]n the committee that meets the student body with the (ah) teachers."*

As Sizer notes, students need practice in the "habits of mind characterizing a democratic citizenry" (quoted in Cushman, 1994, p.1). Indeed, when students have a chance to practice making responsible decisions as a group, they take another major step toward adulthood in a democratic citizenry. The citywide schools, then, have the potential to become political laboratories for democracy, rather than the benevolent dictatorship evidenced in the neighborhood schools.

Conclusion

As is evidenced by the preceding analysis, the neighborhood schools and the citywide schools are two quite different schools. In many regards, they are as different as night and day. Students resist at both of these types of schools, but the nature of that student resistance is a function of the student culture. At the neighborhood schools we see a very negative student and school culture, while at the citywide schools we see very positive and nurturing student and school cultures.

By presenting the analysis in two separate parts, I hope I have been able to impress upon the reader the dramatic contrasts between these schools. For it is the "between-school" comparison that has proven most fruitful for analysis. For example, the responses of the students at the neighborhood schools were so similar that an analysis by race, gender, class, or school performance was of little or no use. The same applied to the citywide schools. But I would not want to too readily dismiss for further investigation a look at the "within-school" analysis. Issues of race and gender need to be more fully investigated in relation to issues of resistance.

This study of four inner-city high schools has, for me, raised more questions that it has probably answered. Someone once told me that that was the nature of research. I aim in future research to address some of these lingering questions. I must admit, though, that the data and the resultant analysis, have pushed me to the issues of student voice and subjectivity. It is to this postmodern terrain that I now travel.

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Appendix A

(SEE NEXT TWO PAGES)

CODE MAPPING
NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS
RESEARCH QUESTION: SCHOOL CONDITIONS THAT PROMOTE RESISTANCE

(THIRD ITERATION: APPLICATION TO DATA SET)
PHILOSOPHY OF CONSCIOUSNESS:
GOVERNING PARADIGM

ASYMMETRICAL CHARACTER OF EDUCATIONAL PROCESS	*PARADOX OF EDUCATION*	*RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL & SOCIETY*

(SECOND ITERATION: PATTERN VARIABLES)

STUDENT CULTURE

CONSTRUCTION AS A CHILD	LACK OF STUDENT TRUST	SILENCING OF VOICE	IRRELEVANCE OF CURRICULUM

(INITIAL CODES/ SURFACE CONTENT ANALYSIS)

-TEACHER TREATMENT OF STUDENT	- RIDICULE BY TEACHER	- DISCOURSE OF NO DIFFERENCE	-EVERYDAY LIFE
-LACK OF TEACHER RESPECT FOR STUDENT	-CURSING BY TEACHER	-INSTITUTIONALLY SANCTIONED DISCOURSE	-NO CONNECTION (HOME/ SCHOOL)
-TEACHER GOSSIP BEHIND STUDENTS' BACK	- LACK OF NURTURING	-EQUAL TREATMENT	-BACK HERE/ OUTSIDE
-ADULT-ORDERED LANDSCAPE	-UNCOMFORTABLE	-CONFORMITY TO SCHOOL RULES/ VALUES	-MINIMUM WORK TO GET BY
		-EDUCATION DOESN'T INSURE JOB	

DATA

CODE MAPPING
CITYWIDE SCHOOLS
RESEARCH QUESTION: SCHOOL CONDITIONS THAT PROMOTE RESISTANCE

(THIRD ITERATION: APPLICATION TO DATA SET)
PRACTICAL INTERSUBJECTIVITY:
GOVERNING PARADIGM

SYMMETRICAL CHARACTER OF EDUCATIONAL PROCESS	*AGENCY/ STUDENT AS SUBJECT*	*RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL & SOCIETY*

(SECOND ITERATION: PATTERN VARIABLES)

STUDENT CULTURE

CONSTRUCTION AS AN ADULT	TRUST IN SCHOOL/ CARING	STUDENT VOICE NURTURED	RELEVANCE OF CURRICULUM

(INITIAL CODES/ SURFACE CONTENT ANALYSIS)

-TEACHER TREATMENT -RESPECT -TREATED LIKE ADULTS/ NOT KIDS -MATURITY & RECIPROCITY OF RELATIONS	-TRUST -SUPPORTIVE CLIMATE -TEACHERS/ ADMINISTRATION LISTEN TO STUDENTS -CARING -STUDENTS' INTERESTS ADVANCED BY SCHOOL	-ADMINISTRATION/ TEACHERS LISTEN TO STUDENTS -TEACHERS ENCOURAGE VOICE -SCHOOL STRUCTURE THAT PROMOTES VOICE	-CONNECTIONS BETWEEN COURSES/ LIFE -EVERYDAY LIFE -STUDENTS EXCEL

DATA